

ALABAMA

**FY 2003
Annual Report**

STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

“Collaboration is the Key”

State Rehabilitation Council
Vocational Rehabilitation Service
Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services

*Special recognition and thanks for a job well done
is extended to the following members
who have rotated off the State Rehabilitation Council
after serving two consecutive terms:*

Carol Blades
Chandler Bramlett
Kris Butler
Barbara Crozier
Jo Fowler
Beth Rhegness
Graham Sisson
Carol Toney

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Steve Shivers
Commissioner

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As the new chairman of the State Rehabilitation Council, I am pleased with the efforts made during FY 2003 to improve the lives of Alabamians with disabilities. The council has continued to collaborate with the Vocational Rehabilitation Service in an effort to enhance and implement existing policies and goals to bring about positive changes in services which will make a difference in the lives of the people we serve.

I am particularly proud of the accomplishments of this past year. We have reviewed a variety of policies and given input where necessary.

I feel assured that in FY 2004 the State Rehabilitation Council will continue to support VRS with vital input and that as a team we will strive to make an even greater impact on the lives of Alabamians with disabilities.

Jeff Cofield
Chairperson
State Rehabilitation Council

The Vocational Rehabilitation Service division of ADRS, with the support of the State Rehabilitation Council, reached an important milestone in 2003. More than 44,000 Alabamians with disabilities received the individualized services necessary to prepare them to enter Alabama's workforce in their pursuit of self-sufficiency and independence. That level of success, as the title of this report proclaims, can be credited to collaboration among all partners, at every level.



On behalf of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services and all of our consumer families, I want to thank you individually and collectively for your tireless efforts in improving the lives of so many fellow citizens. At the same time, I challenge you to renew your commitment to our shared mission so that Alabamians with disabilities of all ages can receive the quality services which enable them to achieve their maximum potential.

Steve Shivers, Commissioner
Alabama Department
of Rehabilitation Services

Purpose

The State Rehabilitation Council provides support and assistance to the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services through program planning, policy development and delivery of services.



History

In January 1995, as mandated by the Alabama Legislature, Vocational Rehabilitation Service was moved from the State Department of Education to the newly formed Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS). This milestone event created a unique partnership between the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) and the newly named board of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services. Working in partnership with ADRS, SRC provides valuable input in administrative codes and rules necessary to regulate Alabama's vocational rehabilitation services.

Working together, the Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services and the State Rehabilitation Council strengthen the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of vocational rehabilitation services for all Alabamians with disabilities.

Council Functions

- ❖ to review and analyze the State Plan and advise ADRS regarding its related responsibilities within the plan;
- ❖ in partnership with ADRS, develop and review goals and priorities, evaluate the effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation program, and submit reports of progress to the Rehabilitation Services Administration commissioner;
- ❖ to advise ADRS regarding authorized activities under the Rehabilitation Act and to assist in preparation of the State Plan, its amendments and in carrying out other requirements of the Act;
- ❖ to review and analyze the effectiveness of consumer and other surveys;
- ❖ to prepare and submit an annual report of council activities to the governor and the ADRS commissioner;
- ❖ to coordinate council activities with activities of other councils;
- ❖ to provide for coordination and establishment of working relationships between ADRS, the State Independent Living Council and independent living centers; and
- ❖ to perform other functions consistent with the purpose of the Rehabilitation Act.

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PERFORMANCE

Throughout the four quarterly meetings of FY 2003, the State Rehabilitation Council focused on performing functions and duties as outlined by the Rehabilitation Act. The following indicates such functions and activities:

Function: **Review, analyze and assist in preparation of state plan**

Activities:

1. Each member was given a copy of the State Plan and attachments to review and was asked to submit comments if it was felt that changes or recommendations were necessary.
2. Each member also was given a schedule and was invited to attend the State Plan public hearings.
3. SRC members were provided additional information on the new sliding fee schedule and asked for comments and suggestions. One suggestion was that the agency attempt to obtain discounts on tuition from colleges and universities to which large numbers of VR clients were referred.

Function: **Develop and review goals and priorities**

Activities:

1. The agency continued to notify the SRC of production goals, and the SRC agreed with them.
2. SRC members were given information on the agency's Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) and given an opportunity for input. No significant changes were offered.
3. SRC members were notified of current training programs for VRS staff and consumers and given the opportunity for input.

Function: **Evaluate effectiveness of VR program and review and analyze effectiveness of consumer and other surveys**

Activities:

1. Each member was given information on the results of the agency's Consumer Satisfaction Survey and the opportunity for input. No significant changes were offered. (See activities of Consumer Services/Program Evaluation Subcommittee.)
2. The SRC continued to be instrumental in the implementation of the Employer Survey. Specifically, the SRC Employment Subcommittee reaffirmed its prior suggested changes to the survey and suggested that it be done every six months. (See Activities of Employment Subcommittee for more details on the Employer Survey.)
3. SRC members were given information on RSA's annual review of the VR program. No comments were received.

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Function: Coordinate council activities with activities of other councils

Activities:

1. The SRC continued to respond to information requests from other SRCs, including requests for annual reports and resource plans.

Function: Establish working relationships between Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS), the State Independent Living Council (SILC), and independent living centers (ILCs)

Activities:

1. At least one member of the SRC continues to serve on the board of an independent living center and shares information between the two groups. This same member helped to organize the new ILC in Montgomery.
2. Some SRC members continue to serve on the SILC and are given the opportunity to report significant information back to the SRC. One SRC member serves as chair of the SILC.
3. Some SRC members are members of the Alabama Disabilities Action Coalition (ADAC), Alabama Council for Developmental Disabilities, and the Birmingham Independent Living Center. As such they share information from meetings so that activities can be coordinated. One example of such coordination was a statewide legislative day, an advocacy event in which members from the SRC and its local advisory councils participated.

Function: Perform other functions consistent with the purpose of the Rehabilitation Act

Activities:

1. The SRC Budget and Planning Subcommittee (prior to its consolidation with the Executive Subcommittee) updated the SRC Resource Plan (see subcommittee report).
2. The SRC received information and an opportunity to give input on the following:
 - (a.) Welfare-to-Work Program
 - (b.) Outcome of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) monitoring visit
 - (c.) Business Leadership Network
 - (d.) Longitudinal study of the national VR program
 - (e.) Agency's budget and state tax referendum
 - (f.) Impartial Hearing Officer List
 - (g.) Federal legislation affecting the VR program such as H.R. 1261 (Reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act)
 - (h.) Ticket-to-Work Program
 - (i.) ADRS Policy Manual — two SRC members also participated on a committee which reviewed changes to this manual. SRC members were asked for input on a proposed moratorium on surgery.
 - (j.) Community Rehabilitation Programs
 - (k.) Order of Selection — SRC members approved motion to approve Order of Selection when VRS management deems necessary
 - (l.) Agency's Retention/Recruitment Plan

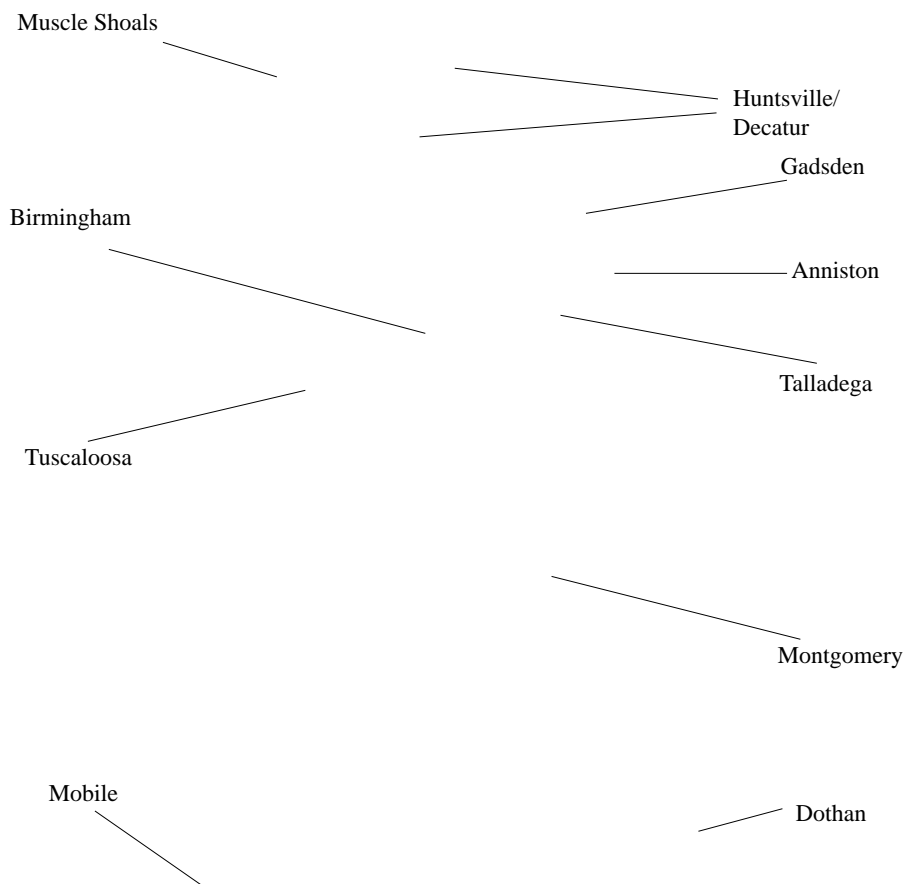
FY 2003 Highlights

**Vocational Rehabilitation
Service
I M P A C T S
Consumers**

- ❖ 44,328 consumers with disabilities received vocational training and employment assistance from Vocational Rehabilitation Service (VRS).
- ❖ 7,705 consumers became employed through the assistance of VRS.
- ❖ 89 percent of all consumers who became employed were severely disabled.
- ❖ VRS employment specialists continue to build ongoing relationships with businesses throughout the state to provide vital contacts for employment-ready consumers. During FY 2003, these specialists delivered 7,415 services to employers and maintained 1,392 employer accounts and contacts. In addition, this team of specialists provided 13,456 employment readiness services to 2,100 of the VRS consumers served.
- ❖ The Alabama Business Leadership Network (BLN) continues to use VRS expertise and resources and its Governor's Committee on Employment of People With Disabilities in growing their network. Their website, ABLE Network (alabamabltn.org), provides businesses with an electronic pool of VRS job candidates and includes employer access to this pool. The site also allows employers to post jobs or job bank websites for review by rehabilitation staff.
- ❖ For every dollar invested in the rehabilitation of a consumer, \$18.79 was returned to the economy as a result of the consumer being placed into employment.
- ❖ Consumers with disabilities were served by VRS through 21 community offices strategically located throughout the state.

**Networking With
Community-Based
VRS Consumer Advisory
Councils**

Local Advisory Councils



Most local advisory councils continued to meet on a regular basis to ensure a voice for consumers at the grassroots level. Some local advisory councils spent FY 2003 recruiting new members and reevaluating their objectives. They further discussed the work incentives in the Ticket-to-Work, Work Incentives-Improvement Act, the Americans With Disabilities Act, and transportation solutions. New topics of discussion included SAIL's new grants for personal assistance services and Reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act. The local advisory councils continue to be a forum for obtaining grassroots input.

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Subcommittee Activities

Executive Subcommittee Members

Jeff Cofield, Chair	Steve Shivers	Jerry Norsworthy
Lloyd Davis, Vice Chair	Graham Sisson	

- Jeff Cofield was selected new SRC chair.
- Continued to schedule and make arrangements for quarterly meetings, plan the agendas and report SRC accomplishments.
- Assumed duties of former Budget/Planning Committee with respect to Resource Plan and Strategic Plan.
- Accepted recommendation that Resource Plan mileage rate be changed from 36.5 cents to 36 cents.
- Approved new subcommittee chairs and members.

Community, Business/Employer Development & Placement Subcommittee Members

Beth Butler, Chair	Glennie Melton	Jo Fowler	Carol Toney
Edsel Johnson	Diane Morrison	Beth Rhegness	Lloyd Davis
Jeff Cofield	Joan Adkison	Missie Hudson	

- Continued to have mission statement that reads as follows: *To enhance employment opportunities for people with disabilities and improve employer satisfaction with VR services.*
- Discussed the development of the ABLE Network web page for the Business Leadership Network and recommended that the full SRC endorse the BLN ABLE Network website which lists available jobs and eligible candidates with disabilities.
- Continued to work on a best practices guide for transportation with assistance of a senior rehabilitation counselor.
- Reviewed employer survey questions and made no further recommendations.
- Received and reviewed information on the VR Regional Employment Network website. No significant changes were recommended.
- Recommended converting the existing VR database to a web-based system
- The subcommittee continued to perform the following tasks and will do so beyond 2003:
 1. review/critique Intranet job bank and applicant pool
 2. review and make recommendations regarding results of annual employer survey
 3. enhance job development efforts by sharing labor market trend information
 4. identify areas of concern and needs of employers

Legislative/Public Information Subcommittee Members

Richard Cox, Chair	Graham Sisson	Liz Moore	Beth Butler
Jack Friday			

- Mission Statement: *To inform SRC members of existing and new legislation which affects the VRS program and persons with disabilities and to propose new legislation which will enhance employment opportunities for people with disabilities.*

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- Continued to monitor state and federal legislation that affects individuals with disabilities.
- Suggested that SRC members attend Alabama Rehabilitation Association Legislative Reception.

Budget & Planning Subcommittee Members

This subcommittee was abolished and its duties assigned to the Executive Subcommittee.

Consumer Services/Program Evaluation Subcommittee Members

Kris Butler, Chair	Sonya Kurtz	Barbara Crozier
Jerry Norsworthy	Elisa Paramore	Michael Gilbert
Graham Sisson	Lily Harold	DaLee Chambers
Jeana Winter	Charles Butler	Jay Croft

- Mission Statement: *To enhance consumer satisfaction with services, service providers and employment, and to assist VRS in developing and implementing strategies to ensure consumer satisfaction.*
- Reviewed mission statement and agreed to keep it the same.
- Continued to facilitate council review of the agency's consumer satisfaction survey and results.
- Agreed no changes should be made to the survey instrument and were concerned with survey response rate which the subcommittee felt was low.
- Recommended that the survey be done 60 - 70 days after a person applies for VR services.
- The full SRC approved a recommendation that a sample of VR clients be surveyed while they are in case status with the exact timing of the survey to be decided by VR personnel.
- Ms. Paramore was appointed chair of this subcommittee upon the expiration of Mr. Butler's second SRC term.

Membership/Nomination Subcommittee Members

Bonner Wagnon, Chair	Leigh Patterson-Lust	Mark McClellan
Graham Sisson		

- Requested reappointment of the following persons:
 - DaLee Chambers
 - Barbara Crozier (declined)
 - Jeana Winter (resigned due to job change)
 - Jerry Norsworthy
- Requested appointment of the following new members (appointments pending):

Missie Hudson	Keith Patterson	Joan Adkison (not pending)
Emily Landers	Seth Moates	
Wendy Dean	Lily Harold (not pending)	

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- Will continue to work towards ensuring that training needs of members are met, including education on standards and indicators of the VRS program, the VRS process, etc.
- Requested affiliation (membership category) list of members which was prepared and distributed confidentially to members.

Bylaws Revision Subcommittee Members

Jerry Norsworthy, Chair Miriam Witherspoon

- The subcommittee continues to monitor the effectiveness of the bylaws and will recommend any necessary changes on an annual basis.

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Membership: Composition

State Rehabilitation Council Chart of Representation

Mandated Representation	Current Number of Representatives	Number of People with Disabilities	Number of Parents
Commissioner	1	0	0
State Independent Living Council	3	3	0
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act	1	1	0
Client Assistance Program	1	1	0
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor	1	0	0
Community Rehabilitation Programs	1	1	0
Business, Industry and Labor	11	0	0
Physical Disabilities	10	10	0
Cognitive Disabilities	3	3	0
Sensory Disabilities	3	3	0
Mental Illness	0	0	0
Mental Retardation	1	1	0
Advocacy Organization	1	0	0
American Indian Program Representative	1	0	0
WIA Representative	1	0	0
Former or Current Recipient of VRS Services	13	13	0
<i>Total</i>	52	36*	0

SRC membership consisted of persons with disabilities, parents and guardians of persons with disabilities, advocates, service providers and representatives of the business community and labor. A majority of the council consisted of persons with disabilities. Membership is geographically and culturally diverse to assure a broad view into decisions that impact vocational rehabilitation services.

* Actual membership is 32 with some individuals representing more than one category and includes new members and those whose terms expired in 2003.

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Membership: Demographics

Jeff Cofield
SRC Chairperson
Disability Team Leader
Alabama Power Company
Birmingham



Richard Cox
Parent
Employer Representative
Mobile



Steve Shivers
Commissioner
Alabama Department of
Rehabilitation Services
Montgomery

Jay Croft
Deaf Consumer
Birmingham



Membership

Joan Adkison
Human Resource Director
American Apparel, Inc.
Selma



Barbara Crozier
WIA Representative
Executive Director
Governor's Office on Disability
(term expired 8/31/03)



Beth Butler
Consumer
Employer Representative
Birmingham

Lloyd Davis
Employer Representative
Mobile



Charles Butler
Consumer
Florence



Wendy Dean
(appointment pending)
Special Education Action Committee
Consumer
Montgomery



Robert Kris Butler
Consumer
State Independent Living Council
Opelika
(appointment expired 8/31/03)

Jo Fowler
Vice President
Communication Workers of
America
Birmingham
(term expired 8/31/03)



Dr. DaLee Chambers
Special Education Services
Alabama Department of Education



Jack Friday
Consumer
Montgomery

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Michael Gilbert
Executive Director
Indian Affairs Commission
Montgomery



Glennie Melton
Senior Counselor
Vocational Rehabilitation Service
Opelika



Lily Harold
Consumer
Montgomery

Seth Moates
Consumer
Birmingham
(appointment pending)



Missie Hudson
Human Resource Director
Coca Cola
Montgomery
(appointment pending)



Liz Moore
Liz Moore Foundation
Birmingham



Edsel Johnson
Former Senior Vocational
Rehabilitation Service Counselor
and Liaison for Wiregrass
Rehabilitation Center
Dothan

Diane Morrison
Executive Assistant
to the Human Resource Manager
Shaw Industries
Andalusia



Sonya Slater Kurtz
Receptionist/Consumer
Lakeshore Rehabilitation Facility
Birmingham



Jerry Norsworthy
Director
State of Alabama
Client Assistance Program
Montgomery



Emily Landers
Consumer
Montgomery
(appointment pending)

Elisa Paramore
Teacher/Consumer
Dothan & Wiregrass Region



Leigh Patterson-Lust
Consumer
Cullman



Keith Patterson
Communication Workers of
America
Opelika
(appointment pending)



Mark McClellan
Consumer
Birmingham

Beth Rhegness
Human Resource Director
Regions Bank
Montgomery
(term expired 8/31/03)



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Graham L. Sisson, Jr.

Assistant Attorney General
Consumer Relations Coordinator
Vocational Rehabilitation Service
Montgomery
(term expired 8/31/03)



Carol Y. Toney

Service Center Director
U.S. Office of Personnel
Management
Huntsville
(term expired 8/31/03)

Bonner Wagnon

Director of Community Life
Programs
Lakeshore Foundation
Birmingham



Miriam Denise Witherspoon

Attorney
Office of Senior Citizens in
Jefferson County
Fairfield

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Appendices: Bylaws

Article I Designation

- Section 1.** **The Name** - The organization referred to in this document shall be known as the *State Rehabilitation Council*, hereinafter referred to as the *Council*.
- Section 2.** **Authorization** - The Council is authorized in accordance with Title I, Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended (29 U.S.C. Section 721 (a) 18)).

Article II Composition and Appointment

- Section 1.** **Composition** - The Council shall be composed of at least one representative of the Statewide Independent Living Council (representative may be the chairperson or other designee of the Council); at least one representative of a parent training and information center; at least one representative of the client assistance program; at least one qualified vocational rehabilitation counselor with knowledge of and experience with vocational rehabilitation programs who shall serve as an ex officio, nonvoting member of the Council if the counselor is an employee of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services; at least one representative of community rehabilitation program service providers; four representatives of business, industry, and labor; representatives of disability advocacy groups representing a cross section of individuals with physical, cognitive, sensory, and mental disabilities; and representatives of individuals with disabilities who have difficulty in representing themselves or are unable due to their disabilities to represent themselves; current or former applicants for, or recipients of, vocational rehabilitation services; at least one representative of the directors of the projects in a State in which one or more projects are carried out under Part C (American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services - Vocational Rehabilitation Services Grants); at least one representative of the state educational agency responsible for the public education of students with disabilities who are eligible to receive services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; and at least one representative of the State Workforce Investment Board.
- Section 2.** **Ex Officio Member** - The Commissioner of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services shall be an ex officio, nonvoting member of the Council.
- Section 3.** **Appointment** - Members of the Council shall be appointed by the Governor. The Governor shall select members after soliciting recommendations from representatives of organizations representing a broad range of individuals with disabilities and organizations interested in individuals with disabilities. In selecting members, the Governor shall consider, to the greatest extent practicable, the extent to which minority populations are represented on the Council.
- Section 4.** **Qualifications** - A majority of Council members shall be persons who are individuals with disabilities not employed by the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services.
- Section 5.** **Chairperson** - The Council shall select a chairperson from among the membership of the Council.
- Section 6.** **Terms of Appointment** - Each member of the Council shall serve for a term of not more than three years.
- Section 7.** **Vacancies** - A member appointed to fill a vacancy occurring prior to the expiration of the term for which a predecessor was appointed, shall be appointed for the remainder of such term. Any vacancy occurring in the membership of the Council shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment. The vacancy shall not affect the power of the remaining members to

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execute the duties of the Council.

- Section 8. Terms of Service** - The terms of service of the members initially appointed shall be for such fewer number of years as will provide for the expiration of terms on a staggered basis.
- Section 9. Number of Terms** - No member of the Council, other than the State of Alabama Client Assistance Program representative and the Native American representative, may serve more than two consecutive full terms.
- Section 10. Delegation** - The Governor may delegate the authority to fill such a vacancy to the remaining members of the Council after making the original appointment.

Article III Council Functions

- Section 1. Review of the State Plan** - The Council shall review, analyze, and advise the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services regarding the performance of the responsibilities of the unit relating to eligibility (including order of selection); the extent, scope, and effectiveness of services provided; and functions performed by the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services that affect or that potentially affect the ability of individuals with disabilities in achieving employment outcomes under the Rehabilitation Act.
- Section 2. Development of State Goals and Priorities** - The Council shall, in partnership with the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, develop, agree to, and review state goals and priorities; and evaluate the effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation program and submit reports of progress to the Rehabilitation Services Administration Commissioner.
- Section 3. Advice Regarding Certain Activities** - The Council shall advise the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services regarding activities authorized to be carried out under the Rehabilitation Act and assist in the preparation of the State Plan and amendments to the Plan, applications, reports, needs assessments, and evaluations required by the Act.
- Section 4. Consumer Satisfaction and Other Surveys** - The Council shall, to the extent feasible, conduct a review and analysis of the effectiveness of and consumer satisfaction with the functions performed by the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, other public and private entities responsible for providing vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities under this Act, and employment outcomes achieved by eligible individuals receiving services under the Rehabilitation Act (including the availability of health and other employment benefits in connection with such employment outcomes).
- Section 5. Preparation of Report to the Governor and Rehabilitation Services Commissioner** - The Council shall prepare and submit an annual report to the Governor and the Rehabilitation Services Commissioner on the status of vocational rehabilitation programs operated within the state, and make the report available to the public.
- Section 6. Coordination With Other Councils** - The Council shall, to avoid duplication of efforts and to enhance the number of individuals served, coordinate activities with the activities of other councils within the state, including the statewide Independent Living Council, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act advisory panel, the State Developmental Disabilities Council, the state mental health planning council and the state workforce investment board.
- Section 7. Coordination of Working ADRS/SILC/CIL Relationships** - The Council shall provide for coordination and the establishment of working relationships between the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services and the State Independent Living Council and centers for independent living within the state.
- Section 8. Other Functions** - The Council shall perform such other functions, consistent with the purpose of the Rehabilitation Act, as the State Rehabilitation Council determines to be appropriate, that are comparable to the other functions performed by the Council.

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Article IV Resources

The Council shall prepare, in conjunction with the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, a plan for the provision of such resources, including such staff and other personnel as may be necessary and sufficient to carry out the functions of the Council under this section. The resource plan shall, to the maximum extent possible, rely on the use of resources in existence during the period of implementation of the plan.

Article V Resolution of Disagreements

To the extent that there is a disagreement between the Council and the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services in regard to the resources necessary to carry out the functions of the Council as set forth in this section, the disagreement shall be resolved by the Governor.

Article VI Council Personnel

- Section 1. Supervision and Evaluation** - The Council shall, in consistence with the state law, supervise and evaluate such staff and other personnel as may be necessary to carry out its functions.
- Section 2. Personnel Conflict of Interest** - While assisting the Council in carrying out its duties, staff and other personnel shall not be assigned duties by the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services or any other agency or office of the state, that would create a conflict of interest.

Article VII Conflict of Interest

- Section 1. Conflict of Interest** - No member of the Council shall cast a vote on any matter that would provide direct financial benefit to the member or otherwise give the appearance of a conflict of interest under state law.
- Section 2. Conflict of Interest Statement** - Each Council member shall sign a conflict of interest statement declaring that the member will disclose all material conflicts of interest in compliance with Section 1 of this article.
- Section 3. Grants or Contracts** - No Council member shall enter into any grant or contract with the Council or any governmental or private entity under the jurisdiction of the Council.

Article VIII Meetings

- Section 1. Quarterly Meetings** - The Council shall convene at least four (4) meetings a year in such places as it determines to be necessary to conduct Council business and conduct such forums or hearings as the Council considers appropriate. The meetings, hearings and forums shall be publicly announced. The meetings shall be open and accessible to the general public unless there is a valid reason for an executive session.
- Section 2. Meeting Notice** - All Council members shall be notified of quarterly meetings at least two (2) weeks in advance.
- Section 3. Called Meetings** - Special or emergency meetings may be called by the Council chairperson at the request of at least five (5) council members or the Executive Committee provided that all Council members have been notified of the meeting at least two (2) days in advance.
- Section 4. Attendance** - Council members with three (3) consecutive unexcused absences from regularly scheduled quarterly meetings may be asked to resign.
- Section 5. Sunshine Law** - All Council meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the *Sunshine Law*.

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Article IX Quorums

- Section 1. Quorum for Council Meetings** - A quorum for all Council meetings shall constitute the members present but in no case shall it be less than seven (7) members.
- Section 2. Quorum for Committee Meetings** - There shall be no quorum requirement for Council committees.

Article X Voting

- Section 1. Eligible Voters** - All Council members who are present are entitled to vote on all matters before the Council.
- Section 2. Majority** - A simple majority vote shall be required to pass all motions.
- Section 3. Proxy Voting** - Absent members may vote by proxy. Such proxy must be in writing and assigned a specific Council member. The Council member holding the proxy must declare the proxy vote each time it is used.
- Section 4. Tie Vote** - The chairperson shall be entitled to vote only in the event of a tie vote.
- Section 5. Recorded Votes** - A visual and auditory vote shall be taken each time a vote is called with a record thereof made a part of the Council meeting minutes.
- Section 6. Accessible Formats** - Upon request, all documents produced or maintained by the Council shall be made available in alternate formats.

Article XI Rules of Order

Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the conduct of business of all Council and committee meetings to the extent they are applicable and not in conflict with these bylaws.

Article XII Compensation and Expenses

- Section 1. Reimbursement** - The Council may use funds allocated to the Council by the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services to reimburse members of the Council for reasonable and necessary expenses of attending Council meetings and performing Council duties (including child care and personal assistance services) and to pay compensation to a member of the Council if such member is not employed or must forfeit wages from other employment for each day the member is engaged in performing the duties of the Council.
- Section 2. Reimbursement Authorization** - The Council chairperson shall obtain reimbursement authorization from the commissioner of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services prior to calling any and all Council or committee meetings.
- Section 3. Reimbursement Rate** - Council members shall be reimbursed for travel and per diem expenses at State rates upon the approval of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services.

Article XIII Hearings and Forums

The Council is authorized to hold such hearings and forums as the Council may determine to be necessary to carry out the duties of the Council.

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Article XIV Council Officers and Their Duties

- Section 1. Officers** - The Council shall have a chairperson and a vice-chairperson.
- Section 2. Nomination and Election** - Officers shall be nominated by the nominating committee and elected by secret ballot by a majority vote of those present and voting.
- Section 3. Time of Election** - The election of new officers shall take place at the last regularly scheduled quarterly council meeting prior to the expiration of the current term.
- Section 4. Assumption of Office** - New officers shall take office at the next regularly scheduled quarterly council meeting after election to office.
- Section 5. Term of Office** - Officers shall hold office for the remainder of their council term but, in no event, shall they serve longer than six (6) consecutive years. They shall retain their office if reappointed as council members upon the expiration of their current council membership term.
- Section 6. Chairperson's Duties** - The chairperson shall preside at all Council meetings, appoint committee chairs, set the agenda for council meetings and chair the executive committee.
- Section 7. Vice-Chairperson's Duties** - The vice-chairperson shall assume the duties of the chairperson upon the chairperson's absence or refusal to perform the duties of the chair.

Article XV Council Committees

- Section 1. Committees** - The Council shall have the following standing committees: Executive, Consumer Services/Program Evaluation, Legislative, Community Business/Employer Development, Membership/Nomination, and Bylaws.
- Section 2. Executive Committee** - The executive committee shall be composed of the council chairperson, vice-chairperson, the commissioner of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, and the chairpersons of the standing committees.
- Section 3. Committee Duties** - Each committee shall develop a mission statement to serve as a guideline for its duties and tasks.

Article XVI Revising the Bylaws

- Section 1. Adoption** - A two-thirds (2/3) vote of those council members present and voting shall be necessary to adopt these Bylaws and any revision thereof.
- Section 2. Notice of Intent to Revise** - Any proposed revision of these Bylaws shall be presented in writing to all council members prior to adoption at least seven (7) days in advance.

State Rehabilitation Council

Conflict of Interest Policy

Statement of Policy

No member of the council shall cast a vote on any matter that would provide direct financial benefit to the member or the member's organization or otherwise give the appearance of a conflict of interest under state law. 34 CFR Part 361.17 (g). When conflicts of interest are identified, the council member to whom the conflict applies must abstain from voting on the issue causing the conflict.

Required Disclosure

Each council member shall disclose orally or in writing all conflicts of interest, including those which are unclear or potential. Such disclosure shall be made to the chairperson of the council.

Effective Date

This Conflict of Interest Policy shall become effective immediately upon approval by a majority of the council. Upon such approval, this policy is incorporated by reference into the council bylaws.

Approved: November 29, 2000
 E. Chandler Bramlett
 SRC Chairperson



**Alabama Department of
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